

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are currently pending. Claims 19 and 20 have been cancelled without prejudice by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter; Claims 1, 2, 9, 10, and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,790,785 to Klug et al. (hereinafter “the ‘785 patent”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,948,054 to Nielsen (hereinafter “the ‘054 patent”) ; and Claims 3-8 and 11-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘785 and ‘054 patents in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,487,583 to Harvey et al. (hereinafter “the ‘583 patent”).

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 19 and 20 are rendered moot by the present cancellation of those claims.

Claim 1 is directed to a server device, comprising, *inter alia*: (1) a user information storage section which stores in advance user information regarding at least one user to be a new member of a system; (2) a staff information storage section which stores staff information regarding at least one sales staff in association with the user information stored in the user information storage section; (3) a communications section which sends and receives predetermined information to and from at least one user terminal through a communication network; (4) an information acquirer which acquires the user information corresponding to at least one user from the user information storage section, in association with the ID information received by an ID information receiver; (5) a member-form sender which sets the user information acquired by the information acquirer in member-form information used for

inputting member information to generate thereby member-form information having at least part of the member information set therein, and sends the generated member-form information to the at least one user terminal through the communications section; and (6) a member information receiver which receives the member information, sent from the at least one user terminal in association with the user terminal information and member-form information sent by the member-form sender, through the communication section.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Office Action asserts that the '785 patent discloses everything in Claim 1 with the exception of the staff information storage section, and relies on the '054 patent to remedy that deficiency.

The '785 patent is directed to a World Wide Web registration processing system for assisting World Wide Web users in registering at websites. In particular, the '785 patent discloses a system in which the user is able to have a common user identification that may be used for accessing services at a plurality of websites. See e.g., Figures 1 and 5 in the '785 patent. However, as admitted in the office Action, the '785 patent fails to disclose a staff information storage section which stores staff information regarding at least one sales staff in association with the user information stored in the user information storage section, as recited in Claim 1.

The '054 patent is directed to method and system for facilitating the exchange of information between human users, e.g., customers and consultants, in a networked computer environment. In particular, the '054 patent discloses a method that includes the steps of: (1) receiving an information request from a human customer via a customer computer; (2) determining, based upon the information request and a set of consultant qualification information, a qualified human consultant qualified to provide the requested information; (3) soliciting the requested information from the qualified consultant user; (4) determining whether the qualified consultant wishes to provide the requested information; (5) receiving

the requested information from the consultant from a consultant computer when the consultant wishes to provide the requested information; and (6) sending the requested information to the customer. As shown in Figure 2, the '054 system includes a database storing information on each consultant, e.g., the consultants' name, rating, and payment information.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the "'054 patent fails to disclose a staff information storage section which stores staff information regarding at least one sales staff in association with the user information stored in the user information storage section, as recited in Claim 1. The '054 patent does not disclose that user information stored in a user information storage section is stored in association with the staff information. The consultant information shown in '054 Figure 2 is not stored in association with any customer or user information. Rather, the '054 patent merely discloses that consultant information is used to select a consultant willing to provide the requested information to a user.

Thus, no matter how the '785 and '054 patents are combined, the combination does not teach or suggest a staff information storage section which stores staff information regarding at least one sales staff in association with the user information stored in the user information storage section, as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established and the rejection of Claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Independent Claims 2, 9, 10, 17, and 18 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in amended Claim 1. Accordingly, for reasons analogous to the reasons stated above for the patentability of Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established and the rejections of Claims 2, 9, 10, 17, and 18 (and all similarly rejected dependent claims) should be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of dependent Claims 3-8 and 11-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, Applicants respectfully submit that the '583 patent fails to remedy the deficiencies of the '785 and '054 patents, as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established and the rejections of dependent Claims 3-8 and 11-16 should be withdrawn.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 17, and 18 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any proper combination of the '785, '054, and '583 patents.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

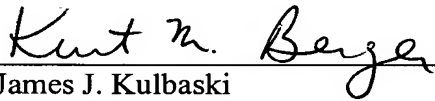
Respectfully submitted,

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